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Bulletin

HARDING COLLEGE SEARCY, ARKANSAS

Volume XXII

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Number 2

BIBLE SCHOOLS— Historical Sketch

Harding College is an outgrowth of the Bible school idea that had its beginning in Nashville, Tennessee, October 5, 1891. James A. Harding and David Lipscomb combined their energies and began a school designed to develop character and give religious instruction along with secular subjects. On the opening day, nine young men presented themselves as the student body. Since this small beginning, there has developed David Lipscomb College and a host of other academies and colleges of the brotherhood. Harding College was in embryo in this early beginning. Its development continued when in 1901 James A. Harding resigned the presidency and went to Bowling Green, Kentucky, to begin the Potter Bible College. At that time Brother Harding said it was not a new school but just a division of the forces of the two schools that twice as much good could be done. With Brother Harding went J. N. Armstrong, who had graduated from the Nashville school in 1896 and served as professor of Greek at Bowling Green. Also on the faculty was B. F. Rhodes. These men believed that Christian education was the answer to the world's need, and inspired by the success of the Potter Bible College, they decided to go West and further the spread of the Bible school movement. Their beginning was at Odessa, Missouri, where the school was called the Western Bible and Literary College. These two men remained together, through work which included Cordell, Oklahoma; to Harper, Kansas, Morrilton, Arkansas, and then to Searcy, where the foundation was laid for the present institution.

The most important move was perhaps the consolidation of the Arkansas Christian College, at Morrilton, and Harper College, at Harper, Kansas, in 1924. A. S. Croom had served as president of the former school from its beginning until the consolidation, while Bro. Armstrong had for several years been president of the latter. In the consolidation, Harper College was moved to the home of Arkansas Christian College, because of the stronger financial position of the latter. The Arkansas brethren proposed the new name—Harding College—and Bro. Croom proposed that Bro. Armstrong be president and he himself vice president of the senior college thus created from the consolidation of the two junior colleges.

HARDING—A UNIQUE INSTITUTION

"To the pure all things are pure," and to the spiritual there is no tiring of spiritual things. Harding College plans purposefully to maintain a spiritual environment. The efforts of the administration, however, are greatly aided by the zeal of the students who have caught a glimpse of spiritual values. This is seen by the voluntary acts initiated by students. Beside attending two regular services on Sunday, many of the students visit the county farm nearby where they sing, pray, and teach. Throughout the week every student has at least one Bible class daily and a spiritual and instructive chapel exercise. On Monday night we have a meeting attended by all boarding students, in which the young men speak on religious themes. The Wednesday evening prayer meeting and the Friday night Personal Evangelism Class are volunteer meetings but are attended by large groups.

It would seem that these many religious meetings would give even the most eager all the religious instruction and spiritual exercise desired, yet it doesn't. To finish off the day, in each dormitory, before bedtime, there is a vesper service of scripture reading, songs, and prayer.

This spiritual emphasis and daily Bible lessons for all, makes Harding College the unique educational institution it is.

MACHINERY ARRIVING

Harding College is sharing in the disposal of surplus machinery of the government to educational institutions. The plan calls for the development of an industrial arts department that will prepare students in all fields of mechanical arts. Some very large, heavy equipment has just been unloaded on the Harding campus. This equipment consists of two drill presses, one large metal shaper, one heavy lathe, one band saw for cutting metal, a large type arc welder and two large grindstones. Along with this equipment came 100 metal lockers and six water fountains. This material was received through the regional office at Dallas. Other material will come through the St. Louis office, which will include one heavy drill press valued at \$3,000 and five airplane engines.

Part of this equipment is free to colleges, and some is bought.

THE POWER OF AN IDEAL F. W. Mattox

From the very first, several distinctive qualities of Harding College made deep impressions on my mind. One of these early impressions was that this was a college that never refused any student admission who had ambition and was willing to work; that social and economic barriers were frowned upon, and true values and standards were urged and upheld. Personal experiences have confirmed these impressions in dozens of cases. I want to tell of one case. We will call him Charlie White.

I know Charlie's home in middle Tennessee. It is not unlike hundreds of other homes from which our students come. Humble, hard-working people that haven't had opportunities and haven't managed too well. As I talked to Charlie's father I overlooked his incorrect grammar as we chatted concerning the heat of the summer's day, the crops, and such like. He had instilled good principles in his children, but just couldn't give them anything other than his good name and a hope that they would be more in the world than he had become.

So Charlie came to Harding, accepting the plan to work on the college farm three months and go to school three months. The summer was hot and the weeks dragged by, but with encouragement Charlie stayed. He caught the vision, his speech improved along with his dress and manners. His industry continually gave him better opportunities and more responsible places. In his senior year he was one of the most popular boys on the campus. He is out in the world now and making good. When I saw his father last he filled with emotion as we parted. Tears came into his eyes as he spoke with pride of his son who could stand on his own beside anybody's son. My heart beat just a little faster too and still does as I think of the great transformation that an ideal—plus encouragement—can bring into a life. This is one blessing of Christian education.

THE PICTURE ON THE BACK

A week before Christmas vacations began Searcy was covered with a beautiful four-inch snow. It was the first snow that many students had ever seen, and while they marveled at it the sixteen from Canada told stories of being snowed in for weeks, but all in all students had a great time in it as the picture indicates.

A PIONEER OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION— JAMES A. HARDING

James A. Harding was born at Winchester, Kentucky, April 17, 1848. His parents were active members of the Church of Christ and he was baptized when 13 years of age. At this time he began a systematic study of the Bible, which characterized his life. His early education was received at Winchester. After spending two years in the college preparatory school of J. D. Fox, he entered Bethany College in Bethany, West Virginia, in 1866, the year of the death of Alexander Campbell, the president and founder. From this institution he was graduated in 1869.

Immediately after leaving Bethany, he began teaching school in Hopkinsville, Kentucky. While here he was married to Miss Carrie Knight, who lived only five years after the marriage. To this union were born three children, two of whom preceded their mother in death. Two years after the death of his first wife, Mr. Harding married Pattie Cobb of Estill county, Kentucky. To this union three children were born, one of whom was Mrs. Woodson Harding Armstrong, wife of J. N. Armstrong, who has been a great influence in the development of Harding College.

Poor health made it necessary for Mr. Harding to give up his work as school teacher, and in 1876 he began to devote his time to evangelistic work. His record shows him to have been a tireless worker. For a period of 17 years he did nothing but preach. During this time he averaged ten sermons a week and held 300 revivals which continued for more than three weeks. During this period he conducted 17 meetings in Nashville, Tennessee, and baptized over 500 persons.

James A. Harding was the moving spirit of the modern Bible school work in the Church of Christ. During the ten years that he was president of the Nashville Bible school and the 11 years he was president of Potter Bible College, he not only did the work required of the president of a school, bearing almost alone the administrative, disciplinary, and financial burden, but he also taught as many classes as most school teachers, preached as many sermons as most preachers, and wrote as many articles as most editors. He continually worked at high tension. As a teacher he was "courteous and thorough, painstaking and conscientious. He really taught for his students learned." As an editor he was well known. His articles were eagerly read by men and women scattered over a wide area. He began the publication of a religious journal, *The Way*, in January, 1899.

He believed his success as a teacher, editor, preacher and debater was due to his veneration for the Bible as the in-

spired word of God and his devotion to its study. He arose at 5 o'clock in the morning to prepare for his Bible study, which, he considered, brought him into the presence of God. For this he would bathe and dress himself with care. He explained that he did not want to come into God's presence shabbily dressed. Thus prepared, he carefully and prayerfully studied the Bible for two hours. The views of Mr. Harding and his beliefs as to what the nature of a religious school should be, have been carefully followed in the development of Harding College.

STUDENTS TO FOREIGN FIELDS

Students from Harding College have in the past made up a large part of the evangelistic force of the church of Christ in lands away from the United States. This is possible because of the spirit of service and sacrifice that pervades the institution. Harding faculty members, with their president, are continually receiving offers of far greater financial consideration than Harding can pay and consistently turn them down.

Harding believes spiritual values to be of far greater importance than temporal and this willingness to sacrifice the temporal gets into the hearts of Harding students, adds power to their lives, and leads them into fields of sacrificial service. The following have announced definite plans for foreign work: Loyd Collier of Bonnerdale, Arkansas, a senior this year, with his wife, who graduated last year as Sara Stubblefield, and is now teaching in our academy, from Viola, Tennessee, are going to Germany next summer; Emmett Smith, a senior from McCrory, Arkansas, and his wife, Emma, who is teaching in our training school, are going to Germany next summer; Frank Curtis, a senior from Lead Hill, Arkansas, is going with Lowell Davis to China in the spring or early summer; Esther Marie Clay, a graduate from Louisville, Kentucky, is going to Germany; Sibyl Rickman, a graduate of Ravenden, Arkansas, is going with Mrs. Myrtle Rowe to Africa; Bob Helston, a junior, from Berkeley, California, is going to Germany, and so is Joe Dan Tipps, a sophomore from Childress, Texas, as soon as he finishes; Freida Hill, a sophomore from Williamsburg, Kentucky, is going to Africa.

These are outstanding young Christian people who will render valuable service for the Lord wherever they are and most of them will be on foreign fields before another fall.

A HARDING FAMILY

Mr. and Mrs. G. T. O'Neal of Hugo, Oklahoma, are strong believers in Christian education. Five of their children have attended, or are now attending, Harding College.

Virginia, now Mrs. R. L. Williamson, attended Harding in 1936 and graduated in 1940. She and her husband are now making their home in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Foy O'Neal came to Harding in 1937 and graduated in 1941. He has recently been discharged from the armed services and has gone into business with his father. He, his wife, and baby are living in Hugo, Oklahoma.

Nell was the next to come to Harding in 1939. She married James S. Maple, who is also a former Harding student. James is in the army stationed at Camp Crowder, Missouri. After his discharge, he plans to go into the automobile business in Antlers, Oklahoma.

Dorothy and Gladys are now attending Harding. Gladys is a freshman and Dorothy a senior.

Billy O'Neal, another brother, is in the armed services at present but plans to enter Harding next fall.

RETURNING FACULTY MEMBERS

Two of Harding's faculty who were much needed have returned to fill their places at this time.

J. D. Bales, associate professor of Bible, has been in the University of California at Berkeley, finishing classroom work for the Ph.D. degree. At the beginning of the second term, he returned to the campus and will resume his teaching while working on his dissertation.

Neal Cope, who was taken by Uncle Sam, resumed his duties the first of the year. Mr. Cope is an assistant to President Benson. His teaching field is journalism. An attempt to obtain his discharge failed but government officials came to our rescue and released Mr. Cope from the army by ruling that fathers of as many as three children be automatically discharged.

MANY VETERANS RETURNING

Returning servicemen are about to overflow Harding's present possibilities for housing. Single men have completely filled all available space in our men's buildings and the overflow is being cared for by considerate citizens who have opened their homes and offered spare bedrooms. Some married couples are bringing their own house trailers. The administration is trying hard to provide for everyone who desires to come.

SPECIAL LECTURES THIS TERM

In keeping with Harding's policy of providing the best for its students, it is bringing to the campus this term some of the outstanding men in the brotherhood who have special contributions to make to students preparing for Christian service. This group of men will include Cecil Hill, G. C. Brewer, K. C. Moser, Jessie P. Sewell and others.

This work is being given in regular classroom lectures with a period for questions and answers. The work does not give college credit, but the classes are well attended and the interest being shown indicates that Harding students are sincere in desire for Christian development and take their Christian responsibility with seriousness.

Brother Benson began the course with lectures on the religious conditions of the East, giving a history of the development of the various religious movements, how they have affected the philosophies of the peoples and made the classes very practical by showing what a person must expect and for what one must prepare who is planning for such work. As this goes to press, K. C. Moser of Oklahoma City is beginning his week of special lectures. Other men will follow in turn throughout the entire term. To bring these men to Searcy is an added expense, but the college considers any money well spent that furthers, as this does, the real reason for the existence of Harding College.

COLLEGE CHURCH INCREASES BUDGET

The congregation that meets at the college auditorium is made up largely of students, many of whom work for most of their expenses. In spite of this, however, the contributions for the past year exceeded the budget, and in the January meeting of the elders and deacons, the budget for 1946 was increased 30 per cent.

This congregation has sent a large part of its contributions to mission fields, and in addition to general increases, \$1,000 is being set aside for benevolent work in China. Workers for China, with Lowell Davis, will return in the spring or early summer. Brother Benson, with Brother Davis, has maintained contact with Chinese workers whose letters have continued to report the hard circumstances of the people.

The elders of the college church have assumed the responsibility of trying to relieve this situation as far as possible. Accordingly, they not only have decided to send \$1,000, but want the brotherhood to know that they will receive funds from other congregations or brethren for this purpose.



MEET OUR PRESIDENT

George Stuart Benson was born in Dewey county, Oklahoma, September 26, 1898. He attended rural schools in Oklahoma then went to Harper College, Harper, Kansas, and graduated from this Junior college in 1923. He received the B. S. degree from Oklahoma A. & M., Stillwater, in 1924 and the B. A. from Harding in 1925.

In 1925 he married Sallie Ellis Hockaday and together they worked as missionaries in China from 1925 to 1930. On returning to the States he received the M. A. degree from the University of Chicago in 1931 and returned to China and did further missionary work until 1936. He established a Bible college and an English school in China and traveled Europe and the Orient extensively. In 1934 Harding College gave him the LL.D. degree and in 1936 called him home to become its president.

At the request of J. N. Armstrong, then president of Harding, the position as head of the school was offered to Dr. Benson by cable. Accepting the offer the Bensons returned to America the long way, through Europe. They reached Searcy in August of 1936 in the middle of the great depression, and undertook immediately to move a heavy debt that overhung the recently acquired college plant.

The debt on the plant was lifted and the mortgage papers burned in formal ceremony at Thanksgiving, 1939. In the subsequent six years, Dr. Benson has given much of his time and energy to promotion—not merely for money but for principles of ethics and economics

to which he is committed as a Christian and an American.

His work has been profitable to the college, far beyond the most sanguine hopes of those depression years of sacrifice and struggle. To show details about financial progress, the President's Annual Report to the Board of Trustees is a better medium than this Bulletin, but the facts are published and available on request.

Early in the current year Dr. Benson addressed the largest audience of his speaking career—a houseful at Madison Square Garden in New York. He talked on "The Cure for Communism—a Return to God." As fruits of his labors, he has brought to Harding College coffers an average of \$1,000 a day for more than 200 days.

A TYPICAL HARDING INCIDENT

Harding College abounds with the unusual. A deep feeling of Christian values plus the best in traditional Americanism makes for the best in human life.

To encourage the study of the American constitution, Samuel B. Pettingill instituted an annual essay contest with a \$50.00 cash prize. (The prize was later increased.) One year the committee of judges selected as the best essay one with the following history.

The winner (we don't need to call his name, though many connected with the school will recognize the description) was of a studious nature—but no more so than many others. He worked hard to be a winner and when his name was announced, and he went forward in the chapel service to receive the reward, I was thankful that he had won. I thought of the new suit he could buy or many other things that I knew he could use, and needed so badly.

When he received the money he expressed his appreciation with a statement that could not and would not have been made in many other schools over the world. He said, "I don't feel that I deserve this, for I had prayed that the Lord would help me write it, and I feel that it is due to his aid that it was selected the winner." None of us realized to what extent he meant this, though no one for a minute doubted his sincerity. The money wasn't used for a suit or other necessities and I didn't find it out until months later, for he didn't want it known; he was afraid that some might think he was seeking praise from men. In fact I suspect he doesn't know that we know it yet, but that prize money was sent to Africa to aid the missionary effort. The Lord had helped him win it and he would see that it would serve the Lord where it was most needed. Such humility and unselfishness makes the Harding student body a wonderful group with which to live.

I Did Not Write the Bible

James D. Bales

The acknowledgment that I did not write the Bible will not surprise anyone. People know that I could not have written it for it is the inspired book and I am an uninspired man. Furthermore, it was in existence before I was born and I could not be the author of that which existed before I existed. Why, then, should I and every Christian impress this fact on others? We need to do so in order that they may be made conscious of the implications of this fact. These implications are: First, since I did not write the Bible I am not responsible for what it teaches; and, second, since I did not write it I am not in a position to change it.

I. I Am Not Responsible for What the Bible Teaches

If anyone wants to praise what is in the Bible let them praise its author and not me. If anyone wants to find fault with what is in the Bible let them find fault with its author and not with me. Before they do that, however, they should remember that by its word they shall be judged (John 12:48). I do have the responsibility of studying the Bible (Eph. 5:17; Acts 17:11-12), and of declaring the whole counsel of God to others (Acts 20:26-27). I should be criticized and taught if I misrepresent the teaching of the Bible. But when it is established that what I have taught is the message of the Bible, then I am not responsible for what it says.

There are people, however, who will find fault with one when he is teaching what the Bible teaches. When we point out that the Bible teaches that baptism is for penitent sinners (Acts 2:38); that

infants are not sinners; and that therefore baptism is not for them; people complain. When we show that baptism is for those who believe (Mk. 16:15-16); that faith comes by hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17); and that therefore infants cannot be baptized; people complain and say that they were baptized as infants and that we are trying to un-Christianize them. **We cannot make or unmake Christians; we can only preach what is written.** And if that which is written reveals that those who were baptized as infants have not been scripturally baptized; there is no need to find fault with us. If fault there is, it is fault with the Bible. But the Bible is true, therefore instead of finding fault they should correct their error and be baptized as penitent believers. The Bible also teaches that baptism is a burial and resurrection and that water is the element in which we are baptized (Acts 8:36-39). Those who have been sprinkled immediately find fault with us and say that we are narrow-minded. We may be, but if we are narrow-minded on this subject it is because we are Bible-minded on this subject. We are not responsible for what the Bible says on this subject. It was not our idea. But it is Bible teaching and therefore we should follow and teach it. People also complain when we point out that the Bible teaches that baptism is one of the things which Christ has required of sinners (Mk. 16:16; Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38, 22:16). Why find fault with us for repeating the words of the Master that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved (Mk. 16:16)? It is not our idea, it is the Lord's command,

therefore we are not to be blamed because some do not like this doctrine.

II. I Cannot Change the Teaching of the Bible

Since I did not write it I cannot change its teaching to suit me or others. If we take a book, written by another, and change it and publish it under the name of the person who wrote the first book, we have done wrong. We do not have the legal or moral right to do it. Furthermore, our additions and revisions are not the teaching of that author. We have misrepresented him, **but we have not changed his teaching.** We may deceive others, but what we added did not actually become a part of his teaching. Just so we could change our teaching and say that our changes are actually the word of God, but that would not change what God said. We could say that he that is baptized and later believes shall be saved, but it still stands that Jesus said that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. We could say that baptism is sprinkling, but Paul still teaches that it is a burial and a resurrection. We could say that he that believeth and is saved may be baptized if he so desires; but Jesus still teaches that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. When He laid down more than one condition, we cannot eliminate all but one. We may try to do so and we may deceive or be deceived, but we do not, we cannot, change what God has said. By his words, not by the perversions of men, we shall be judged, so His word we should follow.

Many false prophets have gone abroad in the land (1 John 4:1), so we must all be careful and search the scriptures to determine whether what we have been taught is true (Acts 17:11-12). Men do not have the power to change God's word to suit themselves or others so let us be sure that we are not following traditions of men which attempt to do it but which can only lead us astray.



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